



COLD WEATHER COMING THIS WEEKEND

Reminder to Keep Warm

SANTA BARBARA, CA – 2/24/2011 – Per the National Weather Services the City will be experiencing inclement weather. The forecast is for temperatures dropping into the low 40s and high 30s on Friday February 25th and Saturday February 26th. At this time the Santa Barbara City Fire Department and Office of Emergency Services would like to remind you to bundle up for coming cold weather. The following is from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website to assist in identifying the signs of Hypothermia.

“Note the following:

- Low body temperature may make you unable to think clearly or move well.
- When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced.
- You may not know you have hypothermia.
- If your temperature is below 95°, the situation is an emergency—gets medical attention immediately.

Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. Body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because a person may not know it is happening and won't be able to do anything about it.

Hypothermia is most likely at very cold temperatures, but it can occur even at cool temperatures (above 40°F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion in cold water.

Victims of hypothermia are often (1) elderly people with inadequate food, clothing, or heating; (2) babies sleeping in cold bedrooms; (3) people who remain outdoors for long periods—the homeless, hikers, hunters, etc.; and (4) people who drink alcohol or use illicit drugs.

Recognizing Hypothermia

Warnings signs of hypothermia:

Adults:

- shivering, exhaustion

- confusion, fumbling hands
- memory loss, slurred speech
- drowsiness

Infants:

- bright red, cold skin
- very low energy

What to Do

If you notice any of these signs, take the person's temperature. If it is below 95°, the situation is an emergency—gets medical attention immediately.

If medical care is not available, begin warming the person, as follows:

- Get the victim into a warm room or shelter.
- If the victim has on any wet clothing, remove it.
- Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin—using an electric blanket, if available. Or use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets.
- Warm beverages can help increase the body temperature, but do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person.
- After body temperatures has increased, keep the person dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.

A person with severe hypothermia may be unconscious and may not seem to have a pulse or to be breathing. In this case, handle the victim gently, and get emergency assistance immediately. Even if the victim appears dead, CPR should be provided. CPR should continue while the victim is being warmed, until the victim responds or medical aid becomes available. In some cases, hypothermia victims who appear to be dead can be successfully resuscitated.”

As cold weather approaches please stay mindful to watch out for your neighbors who may have access and functional needs. Also remember to bring your pets inside and out of the cold.

